

System, Method and Computer Program Product for Conveying Presence Information Via Voice Mail

Abstract

5 A system, method, and computer program product are provided for
conveying availability information of a calling party to a called party. A PBX
serving the telephones of the calling and called parties is connected to a presence
server. In an embodiment of the invention, the presence server is also connected
to a computer and/or other information device (such as a personal data assistant
or telephone) of the calling party. After the calling party has left a voice mail
message for the called party, the called party will subsequently retrieve the
message. In an embodiment of the invention, the PBX then queries the presence
server as to the availability of the calling party. The presence server senses
whether the calling party has indicated his or her presence; if so, it is inferred that
the calling party is probably present and available for a return call. If the presence
server detects no such indication by the calling party, it is inferred that the calling
party is likely to be absent. The presence server responds to the query of the PBX
by indicating the calling party's likely availability (or absence) to the PBX. Based
on this information, the PBX modifies the voice mail message to include a
statement that the calling party is either available or unavailable.